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**Sent:** Wed 7/12/2017 1:26:55 PM  
**Subject:** EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines - Wednesday, July 12, 2017

# **EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines**

**Wednesday, July 12, 2017**

## **\*\*\* DAILY HOT LIST \*\*\***

### **House Seeks EPA Budget Cut, But Not As Much As Trump Wants**

**BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT** House appropriators proposed a modest cut for environmental and public lands agencies in their spending bill for fiscal year 2018, reducing funding to \$31.4 billion from the \$32.37 billion for current spending levels. That funding level is \$4.3 billion above what was included in President Donald Trump's budget request. The bill, released today and scheduled to be considered during a subcommittee meeting Wednesday, would:

- \* Set EPA spending at \$7.5 billion, which is \$528 million less than current spending levels. However, that proposed cut is still \$1.9 billion higher than what was included in Trump's budget request;
- \* Cut the Bureau of Land Management's funding by \$46 million to \$1.2 billion;
- \* Provide \$1.5 billion for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a \$38 million cut; and
- \* Cut the Land and Water Conservation Fund programs by \$125 million.

### **Bill package in Congress funds Bay cleanup**

**EASTON STAR DEMOCRAT** EASTON — A legislative package in Congress proposes funding several environmental initiatives that would help pay for Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts. Six out of nine of the bills included in the package were originally introduced by U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.), according to the senator's spokesman. According to a statement from the senator's office, the package would "reauthorize marquis programs at the heart of restoring and maintaining the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed." Both Democrats and Republicans have signed on as sponsors. "A healthy Bay means a healthy economy for Maryland and the entire Chesapeake Bay Watershed region, which cannot be accomplished without a reliable federal partner," Cardin said. "I urge appropriators to take note of the bipartisan support for authorizing these programs, despite the president's lack of understanding of their worthiness." Chesapeake Bay cleanup funding is feared to be in jeopardy following the release of President Donald Trump's proposed budget, which altogether eliminates funding for the Chesapeake Bay

Program, an arm of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's that helps facilitate Bay cleanup between states across the watershed and tracks progress of pollution reduction. One part of the legislation would reauthorize and fund the Chesapeake Bay Program until 2023 at \$90 million each year, which Cardin's office said is more than the program has ever been funding in its history. "States rely on the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program to provide federal accountability, enforceability, and resources to restore the health of this national treasure," Cardin said. "Less pollution means more oysters and crabs, healthier farmland, more boats and tourism on the water, and more jobs." According to Cardin's office, the current authorization for the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program expired in fiscal year 2005, but Congress has appropriated funds each year...

## **Blog: Despite challenges, PA environmental programs face cuts**

**CHESAPEAKE BAY JOURNAL** Pennsylvania has no new funding for the Chesapeake Bay, drinking water or the Susquehanna River in a 2017–18 budget that includes cuts to environmental and resource agencies. And some worry the situation may get worse as legislators still have no plan in place to fill a \$1.1 billion shortfall in the nearly \$32 billion spending plan. Despite repeated warnings from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to better fund Pennsylvania's lagging Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts and the state's clean drinking water program, environmental programs overall had their funds cut, some by as much as 50 percent. "We continue the same trend that we've had for the last 13 years: reducing environmental funding year after year and not meeting our environmental obligations," said David E. Hess, a former secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection and now an environmental lobbyist. "It will continue the other trend; agencies will keep increasing permit fees to meet their costs. It's an unavoidable consequence of the budget they adopted."...

## **Transcript of Reuters interview with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt**

**REUTERS NEWS SERVICE** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt gave Reuters a wide-ranging interview on Monday at his office in Washington, discussing issues from climate science to automobile emissions. The following is a full transcript of the interview:

**REUTERS:** You have said the EPA will focus on a "Back to Basics" approach under your leadership. What does this mean for how EPA enforces polluters? You have been critical of the idea of regulation by enforcement.

**PRUITT:** I think what I'm speaking about there is a consent decree approach to enforcement, where you use judicial proceedings to actually engage in regulation. Enforcement should be about existing regulations that you're actually enforcing against someone who may be violating that, very much in the prosecutorial manner. As attorney general [in Oklahoma], I lived that. There was a grand jury that I led. Being a prosecutor, I understand very much the importance of prioritization, of enforcing the rule of law, of addressing bad actors. That's something we are going to do in a meaningful way across the broad spectrum of cases, whether it is in the office of air or the superfund area, or otherwise...

## Research on mountaintop removal health effects adequate, panel told

**CHARLESTON GAZETTE-MAIL** Dozens of studies already published about mountaintop removal coal mining's effects on public health provide adequate evidence to support ending the practice to protect coalfield residents, a former West Virginia University researcher and leading author on the subject told a National Academy of Sciences panel on Tuesday. "We know enough," researcher Michael Hendryx told the panel during a meeting in Washington. "If all we do is call for more research, we're asking people to be research subjects without their consent." While at WVU, Hendryx became a target for coal industry criticism when he published dozens of peer-reviewed papers that found coalfield residents living near mountaintop removal operations faced increased risks of cancer, birth defects and premature death, among other health problems. The National Academy of Sciences, with funding from the U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, is conducting a two-year study of the issue, an exercise that in many ways amounts to a review of scientific papers that Hendryx either authored or inspired with his work at WVU. Hendryx, who is not on the academy panel, now is an assistant professor of public health at the University of Indiana Bloomington. The project was announced in August 2016 and funding was in place before the Donald Trump administration - which has promised to roll back regulations on the coal industry - took office. State Public Health Commissioner Dr. Rahul Gupta and former state Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Randy Huffman had asked the U.S. Interior Department for help on the issue, and Interior's OSM provided \$1 million in funding for the academy review.

## Sunoco agrees to extend public water to homes with tainted wells

**PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER** Sunoco Pipeline LP says it will pay to extend municipal water mains to about 30 Chester County households whose private water wells were affected last week by its pipeline construction. The Newtown Square-based company was moving rapidly Tuesday to arrange to extend Aqua Pennsylvania water service to an enclave in West Whiteland Township. About a dozen customers said their water wells went bad after Sunoco began underground drilling in the area to construct its Mariner East 2 gas-liquids pipeline. Township Supervisor George Turner said in an email Tuesday that the company has agreed to "assume responsibility for expansion of the public water system to serve the residents involved." Details about costs, timetables and whether Sunoco will support the residents' monthly water bills were still being worked out. "Today we informed West Whiteland Township that we would move forward with plans to connect homes to Aqua's municipal water supply, at our expense," Jeff Shields, Sunoco's spokesman, said in an email. "We are still assessing the number of homes potentially impacted by construction that will be connected." Sunoco was under pressure from public officials to remedy the damage caused by the company's horizontal directional drilling, which caused some wells to stop flowing and others to go cloudy. Sunoco supplied bottled water and put up several families in hotels after the problems were reported July 3. West Whiteland told residents Tuesday in an online post that the cloudy water does not appear to pose a public health concern, and that water customers served by Aqua's system have not been affected...

## **Trump administration wants to boost value of federal employee buyouts**

**WASHINGTON POST** The carrot half of the carrot-and-stick formula for cutting federal jobs would be sweetened under a proposal the Trump administration has sent to Congress, seeking to increase the maximum value of buyout payments from \$25,000 to \$40,000 government-wide. Buyouts are payments used for “increasing voluntary attrition in agencies that are downsizing or restructuring,” in the words of the proposal, and reduce the need to use the stick side of the equation — the complex and contentious layoff process called reduction in force. A buyout is the lesser of \$25,000 or the severance pay the employee would be due if laid off — as a practical matter, it’s usually the former. The payment is taxable, reducing its value typically to under \$20,000, and employees who accept one generally must repay the full amount if they return to government employment within five years. The \$25,000 figure has been the same since the government first started offering buyouts during the workforce downsizing in the Clinton administration. Last year the Defense Department asked for a boost to \$40,000, arguing that \$25,000 is no longer a sufficient incentive to get employees to resign or retire voluntarily. Congress agreed to the increase, but only at that department and only through September 2018..

## **GOP House members hit Trump plan to break retirement promise to feds on moral, ethical grounds**

**WASHINGTON POST** You can’t always tell a book by its cover or a politician’s position by the party. Rep. Rob Bishop is a Utah Republican known as a solid right-winger. Like many Republicans, he generally doesn’t get good grades on federal workforce issues. His most recent ratings on congressional voting scorecards were 20 percent from the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), 15 percent from the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and 10 percent from the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU). But wait — while he has voted against positions favored by employee groups on many issues, he recently led a [letter from nine Republicans](#) opposing federal retirement cuts proposed by President Trump. It’s a principled position. Citing the various ways Trump’s budget plan would hit feds, despite his call for a 1.9 percent pay raise, the letter says “our strongest objection is how the proposals break a promise to employees and retirees who have based career planning on longstanding promised benefit calculations. They and their families don’t deserve to be treated in this cavalier manner.”...

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# **PENNSYLVANIA**

## **PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER**

[Sunoco agrees to extend public water to homes with tainted wells](#) Sunoco Pipeline LP says it will pay to extend municipal water mains to about 30 Chester County households whose private water wells were affected last week by its pipeline construction. The Newtown Square-based company was moving rapidly Tuesday to arrange to extend Aqua Pennsylvania water service to an enclave in West Whiteland Township. About a dozen customers said their water wells went bad after Sunoco began underground drilling in the area to construct its Mariner East 2 gas-

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### **PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE**

Editorial: Clearing the air: Carnegie Mellon duo is tackling pollution in Uganda Two researchers at the CREATE Lab at Carnegie Mellon University want to continue installing home-ventilation systems in rural Ugandan homes, often smoky from interior cooking fires. Joshua Schapiro and Mike Taylor first tested their shoe-box sized solar-powered ventilation systems in 2013, installing six for Ugandans in Makukuulu Parish in the central part of the country. Now, they are trying to crowd-fund their project after corporate sponsors failed to bite. Almost 28 million people in Uganda live in rural areas, relying on interior stoves, which can lead to respiratory problems and other illnesses from household air pollution. The CMU researchers’ ventilation system can quickly clear air inside the homes; that it is fitted with LED lights can only help to brighten dark interiors...

Consol unveils plans for total gas-coal split this year Consol Energy Inc. hopes to fully separate its oil and gas business from its historic coal mining side by the end of the year, the Cecil-based company announced Tuesday. Consol filed a registration statement to spin off a public company that will be in charge of the Bailey, Enlow Fork, and Harvey mines in southwestern Pennsylvania, a coal preparation plant, the Baltimore coal export terminal, and undeveloped reserves in Appalachia and the Illinois basin, as well as other assets and liabilities. The new firm will also take over Consol Energy’s 25 percent interest in CNX Coal Resources LP, an earlier spinout that holds a 25 percent interest in the southwestern Pennsylvania mine complex. The remaining oil and gas business will be given a new name, while the mining company will trade under Consol Energy Inc. Shareholders of the current Consol will get common stock in the new coal company.

Letter: Moving toward renewable energy is imperative I read the July 2 Forum article “The Delusion of 100 Percent Renewables” and I was appalled. The author, Robert Bryce, assumes that doing the right thing on future energy production is not really possible and, therefore, we should keep on destroying our planet by burning fossil fuels. He discusses the current shortcomings of wind and solar and assumes that major advances will not be made in these and other green technologies. In fact, there are currently a number of new wind turbine designs that will greatly improve the electrical output per square meter. And that is just today. Clearly, many improvements in clean energy generation will be made in the next few years. He assumes that

nuclear power will not be part of the solution. That is not at all clear and the economics of such power systems will dictate what will be the energy sources of the future. He also calls the use of a “carbon duty” on foreign-made goods a “terrible idea.” In fact that idea, along with a carbon fee imposed on domestic carbon fuels with all fees going back to the public, is the best approach to solving the future climate problems. This is the proposal of the Citizens Climate Lobby. Mr. Bryce fails to mention the catastrophic costs in money and human suffering of not moving to 100 percent renewables. The need to do what he calls a delusion is not only possible, it is imperative.

Letter: Climate change occurred in the past through natural forces I am writing in reference to L. Ray Roberts’ letter “Extreme Heat Blasts” (July 3) and how he relates the weather and climate change to the impact of humans. I grew up in Eastern Ohio, just 40 miles from Gateway Center. As a product of public education, I took Ohio history and learned that much of Ohio was covered by glaciers over a period of several million years. However, I also learned that the most recent glacier was the Wisconsinan Glacier that retreated from Ohio only about 14,000 years ago. These glaciers had a dramatic impact on the topography of Ohio with some areas being almost flat but others just a few miles away being blessed with hills and valleys. An even greater impact was the flow of rivers and creeks. The glaciers changed the flows from north to south to south to north. To this day, we see signs on the turnpikes defining the divides of the watersheds. “Climate change” has been going on for a very long time. And whether several million years ago or just 14,000 years ago, the natural course of nature’s own climate change was not impacted by humans or their modern-day conveniences. The climate change was impacted by natural forces. This isn’t just from a small-town person from Ohio. There are many geographic regions around the U.S. that had similar geological and climate history long before humans lived, from the former ocean that used to cover almost all of the Midwest to the changing of river flows and directions over many years...

Letter: Human activity creates environmental rubbish that we must clean up I read Terrence Feitknecht’s July 11 letter (“God in Control”) linking his faith, the Declaration of Independence and Donald Trump’s pulling the United States from the Paris Agreement. No matter how deep my admiration for the Declaration of Independence or however strong my faith, profound truths are revealed through simple reality. When I (man) find my yard (part of God’s great creation) filled with rubbish (human activity), I need to go out there and clean it up. So far, God has not intervened.

## **STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA**

Sunoco to replace private well water with public supply in Chester County Sunoco Pipeline agreed on Tuesday to pay for public water to be supplied to about 30 homes in Chester County’s West Whiteland Township where water from private wells turned cloudy after a Sunoco pipeline drilling operation for the Mariner East 2 hit a spring, a township official said. The company made the commitment at a meeting with township officials on Tuesday morning, said George Turner, a township supervisor. The homes will be connected to the local water line operated by Aqua America. Turner said details such as how long it would take to make the connections and how long the affected households will be supplied with bottled water or extra filtration systems have yet to be worked out, but that residents will be sent letters explaining the changes later Tuesday. “We have reached resolution with Sunoco that they will bring public water to all of the affected homes,” he said. Turner said the company had opted to convert the homes to public

water because of an expectation that private well water would remain cloudy. “It’s going to continue to give the people cloudy water and they are never going to be satisfied,” he said. “We want them to have what they had before Sunoco ever came to town.”

### **WESA-PITTSBURGH'S NPR STATION**

Peduto Blames Harrisburg For Delay Of Lead-Related Bills In City Council For the fourth week in a row, Pittsburgh City Council will not discuss a pair of lead-related bills at its committee meeting this week. One of the bills would require home sellers to disclose the presence of lead plumbing, while the other would authorize the city to perform replacements of private lead service lines. Mayor Bill Peduto called the latter bill a “convoluted” solution to the lead line replacement problem. Leaders in Harrisburg have effectively abandoned a bill introduced in May by Sen. Wayne Fontana (D-42) that would have authorized the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority to do full lead line replacements. The lead line replacement bill is “a secondary measure to be taken if we don’t get the action we need in Harrisburg,” Peduto said. PWSA halted a short-lived program of partial lead service line replacements last month. The public side of a line runs from the water main to the curb and is owned by PWSA. The private side runs from the curb to the house and is owned by the property owner. But some, including Allegheny County Controller Chelsa Wagner, have contended that replacing only the public side of a line mobilizes lead particles and presents a risk to residents. PWSA suspended the program after drinking water tested at some homes came back with higher lead levels after the partial line replacements. The authority has argued that case law based on the Municipal Authorities Act bars it from competing with private companies, and that replacing the private side of a lead service line would represent such an act of competition...\_

### **ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL**

Public To Get Its Say On PA American Water Rate Hike The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission will hold nine public hearings later this month and in August on a proposed \$107.9 million rate hike sought by Pennsylvania American Water Company, which supplies thousands of Northampton County customers. The lone area hearing is 6 p.m. Aug. 1 at East Stroudsburg University’s Innovation Center on Independence Road in East Stroudsburg. The utility said its proposal would raise the monthly bill of a typical residential customer by \$9.49, or 17 percent. The bill would climb from \$55.63 to \$65.12 a month, according to company calculations. That is based on using 3,630 gallons per month. The company said the primary reason for the proposed increase, which it filed April 28, is to recover \$1.26 billion it will have invested in improvements since 2013, when it last won approval for a \$26 million annual rate increase. The PUC voted to postpone a decision on the current case pending hearings and further investigation. The PUC said in a news release that one of the public sessions will be a “smart hearing,” 1 p.m. July 27 in Harrisburg. A smart hearing allows customers to testify about rate increases via telephone and watch the proceedings via webcast. The goal has been to increase customer engagement. Typically, public hearings at various sites around a utility’s service territory tend to draw anemic audiences.

### **CARLISLE SENTINEL**

Student leaders learn about environment, Chesapeake watershed About 75 student leaders from the Chesapeake Bay watershed states are taking five educational courses through Saturday,

sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Area students were among those who took to the Susquehanna River and area farms to learn more about the watershed and the environment. Emma Stone, a Carlisle High School student, took a canoe paddle trip down the Susquehanna and discovered American Indian carvings on a group of rocks. "It's crazy to think they are in Pennsylvania," Stone said of the petroglyphs. "Usually you think of more exotic places for them, not Pennsylvania." Earlier in the day, she and other students visited a Carlisle area farm owned by Denny Garman. "This whole farm is run by only five people and farmer Denny went out of his way to figure out what he could do to help the farm and the environment," Stone told the foundation. "And five people run 200 acres. That's so impressive." The students are part of the foundation's Student Leadership Council and are taking part in the 50 Forward program. The courses encourage students to learn through observation and interviewing experts. Among the students participating are those from Big Spring High School, Carlisle High School, Cumberland Valley High School, Mechanicsburg Area Senior High School, Northern High School and Shippensburg Area Senior High School. "We hope that the student leaders feel a deep connection to the world around them and how their choices may impact our environment," said Emily Thorpe, Student Leadership Council coordinator in Pennsylvania. "I hope that they feel empowered to become leaders in their own schools and communities and share what they are passionate about with others." On Monday, the students saw the Garman farm and the petroglyphs on the Susquehanna River between York and Lancaster counties. On Tuesday, the students traveled to the bay to learn about farming practices. Saturday's main event will explore the bay from the foundation's environmental education center on Port Isobel Island, east of Tangier Island.

### **WEST CHESTER DAILY LOCAL NEWS**

West Goshen fights Sunoco on construction of Mariner East 2 pipeline WEST GOSHEN >> The township has filed a petition to stop construction of an above-ground valve for the Sunoco Mariner East 2 pipeline that township Special Counsel David Brooman says "breached the terms" of a May 2015 settlement agreement. An emergency hearing with the Public Utility Commission is scheduled for July 18 in Harrisburg. While the lawsuit was originally filed in February, Brooman said that the township did not think Sunoco would start construction of the pump valve at this time. "We can get emergency relief to maintain the status quo quickly," Brooman said about the emergency hearing. The township is not trying to shut down the entire 350-mile long pipeline slated to carry volatile Marcellus Shale product from western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio to the refinery in Marcus Hook. "The township is trying to prevent them from putting a valve next to the firehouse," he said. "West Goshen Township is not looking to stop the Mariner East 2 pipeline. "The township is seeking to enforce its settlement agreement with Sunoco. Sunoco promised they wouldn't build any more above-ground facilities in West Goshen Township."...

Uwchlan charts a new roadmap for gas pipelines UWCHLAN -- Board of Supervisor Chair Joe Toner said, at Monday's meeting, that he wants the township to take a lead in limiting future pipelines shipping highly volatile fuels on a statewide scale. Toner spoke to about 50 concerned residents following Sunoco's recent contamination of drinking water to several homes served by wells, as the company constructs the Mariner East 2 Pipeline. He said that when the township drafts policy regulating pipelines that other municipalities in the county might use the Uwchlan version as a template. "It is a dangerous product," Toner said about the colorless, odorless and



heavier than air product Sunoco plans to ship. "This is not a good thing for our community." Toner said that, this "little township," one of 73 municipalities in Chester County, could serve as a guide for other county municipalities, and eventually on a statewide basis. He hopes to eventually influence the work of the Public Utilities Commission, which regulates pipelines. "Across Chester County let's start to put this together," Toner said. "Uwchlan is not just one little burg, countywide. People don't start to pay attention until people band together." Toner pointed to the work of state Rep. Carolyn Comitta, D-156, and state Sen. Andy Dinniman, D-19. "She's trying to put together a broad coalition," Toner said about Comitta. Toner hopes to use the Bill of Rights as a "roadmap." "How do you make the Bill of Rights work in the municipal world?" he asked. Until recently, the township hadn't planned ahead to regulate pipelines, airports or tunnels because there was no perceived need to regulate them. "The state is filling in ordinances where we have pieces missing," the supervisor said.

Sunoco responds after contaminating drinking water wells Sunoco Pipeline is working with 14 households in the Exton area "to resolve private water well water issues near construction on the Mariner East 2 pipeline," according to a release sent Monday by Jeffrey Shields of Sunoco. Sunoco contaminated well drinking water while digging the pipeline. Uwchlan Township officials reported at Monday's meeting that public water provider Aqua America, Inc., had recently tested public water supplies and they were deemed safe. Homes on Township Line Road and Valley View Drive, mostly in West Whiteland Township, but also in Uwchlan Township, first reported either losing water pressure or experiencing cloudy water beginning Monday July 3, reads the release. State Sen. Andy Dinniman, D-19, and State Rep. Carolyn Comitta, D-156, opposed restarting construction until the problem is fully understood and addressed. Crews have been working on a horizontal directional drill to lay pipeline between West Whiteland and Uwchlan, with a total of 23 miles of planned pipeline construction through Chester County. "Drilling was suspended July 3, following the first reports of well water problems," reads the release. "Measures were taken to stabilize the drill hole and prevent infiltration of groundwater into the drill hole, and drilling resumed Saturday, July 8, with backup water supplies in place as a precaution. We are working in close coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to ensure that our activities meet the strict guidelines of our permits." Shields stated that water supply was restored to those who lost it, additional filtration devices for households experiencing cloudy water were installed, water testing is underway and bottled water was provided to affected residents. "We have tested approximately 26 private wells in total (a number of residents requested the testing as a precaution) and are awaiting full results," Sunoco said. "One family chose to remain in a hotel Saturday and Sunday night, and none tonight, as of last report. We had as many as five families one night last week (Wednesday) in hotels."...

## **HARRISBURG PATRIOT NEWS**

First West Nile Mosquitoes Of 2017 Found In Dauphin County Dauphin County has reported its first two mosquito samples infected with West Nile. The infected samples in Harrisburg and Swatara Twp. on July 6, but no human cases have been reported in Dauphin County. Two positive samples were collected last month in Cumberland County -- in Lemoyne and in East Pennsboro Twp. West Nile virus, when transmitted to people, can cause West Nile encephalitis, an infection that can result in an inflammation of the brain. The Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention has said that all residents of areas where virus activity has been identified are at risk. Symptoms in severe cases include a high fever, headache, neck stiffness, muscle weakness, disorientation, tremors and convulsions, according to a news release from Cumberland County, and demand immediate medical attention. Less than one percent of infections develop into encephalitis.

### **LANCASTER NEWSPAPERS**

American eel restoration for Susquehanna includes 3 Lancaster spots American eels, like American shad, were once a staple in the diets of Lancaster County residents but have nearly disappeared from the Susquehanna River. Now, three county locations are featured in a new effort to restore eels above the dams that doomed their migratory runs from the Atlantic Ocean. Last fall, 21,094 juvenile eels newly arrived from the Sargasso Sea near Bermuda were captured in Octoraro Creek at the base of the Pine Grove low-head dam in Little Britain Township. Slithering young 4-6-inch eels were there because the Octoraro Creek is one of the few freshwater streams the eels can swim up before hitting a stone wall in the form of the Conowingo Dam. Using a simple contraption that's pretty much a sliding board with rushing water from a hose, young juveniles swim up the device and are captured...

Editorial: Nuns Make Laudable Hail Mary Pass In Opposing Atlantic Sunrise Pipelines Three-hundred people turned out Sunday afternoon for the dedication of a simple, open-air chapel built by opponents of the Atlantic Sunrise pipeline project in a West Hempfield Township cornfield near Columbia. As LNP has reported, the land is owned by the Adorers of the Blood of Christ religious order, which has been there since the 1920s and runs St. Anne's Retirement Community on the property. The nuns have refused to sell an easement for the pipeline to builder Williams, which is planning to start construction later this year. They say such a sale would violate their beliefs about the land and the environment. It sounds like the jumping-off point of an improvisational sketch, but these are among the real-life elements in the ongoing Atlantic Sunrise natural gas pipeline saga in Lancaster County. Last week, a federal judge was asked by Williams to grant its request to immediately seize the nuns' land in the pipeline's path. U.S. District Court Judge Jeffrey Schmehl ruled Friday that the land could be condemned and seized, but not before eminent domain proceedings are heard July 17, as previously scheduled. This allowed the dedication ceremony to be held Sunday. Nuns. An open-air chapel in a cornfield. Pipeline protesters. And a judge...

### **WILKES-BARRE TIMES LEADER**

Barletta Lauds New FEMA Policy On Landowner Control Of Oil & Gas Rights WILKES-BARRE — U.S. Rep. Lou Barletta is lauding a new Federal Emergency Management Agency policy allowing property owners greater control of oil, gas, or mineral rights on property acquired with FEMA mitigation funds. The policy change would allow hydraulic fracturing on such properties. Barletta, R-Hazleton, sent then-FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate a letter in 2014 urging FEMA to rescind a policy that banned hydraulic fracturing on property purchased with mitigation money. The lawmaker argued the policy hurt property owners who want to relinquish only surface rights while maintaining subsurface rights...

Back Mountain Home Construction Held Up By DEP Sewer System Order KINGSTON TWP. — No public-sewer connection permits will be issued for new construction in the Back

Mountain region due to environmental violations that must be corrected, according to a letter from the state. The hold on the permits is preventing new home construction from continuing during the height of the building season in Dallas, Jackson, Kingston and Lehman townships as well as Dallas and Harveys Lake boroughs, said Thomas Keiper, executive director of Dallas Area Municipal Authority. “We can issue permits for on-lot systems (septic systems),” Keiper said. The sewer-permit stoppage prohibits municipalities from accepting building permit fees and remains in place for about six months or until DAMA develops a corrective action plan, Keiper said. “Currently, we have 85 percent of it done,” he said. But the plan must be presented at a public meeting for comments, submitted to the state for approval, and adopted by each of the municipalities DAMA serves. DAMA received the moratorium notification from the Department of Environmental Protection in a letter dated June 13, which stated a sewage overflow in April caused the discharge of untreated sewage from its main pumping station into Toby Creek. The incident is not so unusual for DAMA, according to DEP’s letter...

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## WASHINGTON, D.C.

### **WASHINGTON POST**

Trump administration wants to boost value of federal employee buyouts The carrot half of the carrot-and-stick formula for cutting federal jobs would be sweetened under a proposal the Trump administration has sent to Congress, seeking to increase the maximum value of buyout payments from \$25,000 to \$40,000 government-wide. Buyouts are payments used for “increasing voluntary attrition in agencies that are downsizing or restructuring,” in the words of the proposal, and reduce the need to use the stick side of the equation — the complex and contentious layoff process called reduction in force. A buyout is the lesser of \$25,000 or the severance pay the employee would be due if laid off — as a practical matter, it’s usually the former. The payment is taxable, reducing its value typically to under \$20,000, and employees who accept one generally must repay the full amount if they return to government employment within five years. The \$25,000 figure has been the same since the government first started offering buyouts during the workforce downsizing in the Clinton administration. Last year the Defense Department asked for a boost to \$40,000, arguing that \$25,000 is no longer a sufficient incentive to get employees to resign or retire voluntarily. Congress agreed to the increase, but only at that department and only through September 2018..

GOP House members hit Trump plan to break retirement promise to feds on moral, ethical grounds You can’t always tell a book by its cover or a politician’s position by the party. Rep. Rob Bishop is a Utah Republican known as a solid right-winger. Like many Republicans, he generally doesn’t get good grades on federal workforce issues. His most recent ratings on congressional voting scorecards were 20 percent from the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), 15 percent from the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and 10 percent from the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU). But wait — while he has voted against positions favored by employee groups on many issues, he recently led a letter from nine Republicans opposing federal retirement cuts proposed by President Trump. It’s a principled position. Citing the various ways Trump’s budget plan would hit feds, despite his call for a 1.9 percent pay raise, the letter says “our strongest objection is how

the proposals break a promise to employees and retirees who have based career planning on longstanding promised benefit calculations. They and their families don't deserve to be treated in this cavalier manner."...

Q&A for federal workers: New TSP investment, withdrawal options **Q:** When is the TSP going to give us more investment choices?

**A:** The Thrift Savings Plan, the 401(k)-style program for federal employees, offers five funds that reflect stock and bond markets. One of those, tracking international stocks, will be broadened in 2019 to include emerging markets and Canada. The TSP also offers "lifecycle" funds that mix investments in the basic funds in ratios that vary with the expected withdrawal dates — 2020, 2030, 2040 or 2050. Those mixes become more conservative over time. In 2020, the fund with that date will merge with a current income fund and the TSP will offer funds with five-year increments through 2065. Separately, the TSP is working to allow account holders to invest in funds other than the ones it offers, including actively managed mutual funds, through an investment "window." There is no projected date for that window to open. Meanwhile, bills are pending in Congress to allow more choices for withdrawing money after leaving the government — and, for those at least age 59½, while still employed. All the planned changes are aimed at bringing the TSP more up to date with what's available in other retirement savings programs.

The Energy 202 Blog: Trump could start his infrastructure push at Energy Department President Trump has said that he wants to spend \$1 trillion on rebuilding U.S. infrastructure, an investment in the nation's public structures the size of which has not been seen since the construction of the interstate highway system. Trump may be hard-pressed to get that tall sum from his fellow, penny-pinching Republicans in Congress. But he already has a pot of money sitting at the Energy Department that, some argue, can be used to finance energy infrastructure projects today without any additional congressional approval...

Editorial: Clean Coal? It's Not Here Yet The United States now can officially count two disastrous, expensive failures of carbon capture and storage — a technology key to realizing the dream of "clean coal." The Kemper County Energy Facility in Mississippi was supposed to burn cheap lignite coal without emitting climate-altering carbon dioxide. The state ended up with a very expensive natural gas plant that pumps carbon dioxide into the atmosphere like any other. The idea was to turn coal into a synthetic gas, from which planet-warming carbon dioxide would be removed before it was burned. Backed by federal cash, Kemper was supposed to show that, under the right circumstances, power generators could burn coal without contributing to global warming. The plant was supposed to cost \$2 billion. Instead, the technology never operated for long stretches, and the project went nearly \$5 billion over budget. Last week, its owners finally relegated the plant to burning natural gas, the most common fuel used in electricity generation in the United States, without any diversion of greenhouse emissions. This is the second federally funded clean-coal boondoggle. The first, known as FutureGen, was supposed to showcase innovative carbon capture and storage technology at a breakthrough Illinois plant. Despite a strong push from the local congressional delegation, the George W. Bush administration ended the hapless experiment, and the plant never operated, despite an Obama-era effort to revive it. More wasted money...

One of the biggest icebergs in recorded history just broke loose from Antarctica Scientists

announced Wednesday that a much anticipated break at the Larsen C ice shelf in Antarctica has occurred, unleashing a massive iceberg that is more than 2,200 square miles in area and weighs a trillion tons. In other words, the iceberg — one of the largest in recorded history to...

Controversial Alaskan gold mine could be revived under Trump's EPA The Trump administration has taken a key step toward paving the way for a controversial gold, copper and molybdenum mine in Alaska's Bristol Bay watershed, marking a sharp reversal from President Barack Obama's opposition to the project. The Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday proposed withdrawing its 2014 determination barring any large-scale mine in the area because it would...

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## DELAWARE

### **WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL**

A first step toward revitalizing Wilmington neighborhoods Philadelphia Federal Reserve Bank President Patrick Harker toured Wilmington's East Side neighborhood.

Delaware volunteers help contain Western wildfires A 20-person team of Delawarean volunteers will travel West to battle wildfires in the Rocky Mountain region.

Frankford still hurting financially after commercial well issue, officials say At the July 10 meeting of the Frankford town council, council members and citizens struggled to come to terms with the loss of income from the Mountaire Farms well.

Inspiring Women in STEM Conference date, speakers announced Two women helping to lead Delaware's future economic growth in the fields ... The university's long-term goal is to transform the former industrial site into an “urban-scale environment” of innovation and collaboration that includes a ...

### **SUSSEX COUNTIAN**

Caesar Rodney student attends Washington Youth Summit on the Environment Kevin Bowne, an 11th-grader, represented Caesar Rodney High School and Delaware as a National Youth Delegate to the 2017 Washington Youth Summit on the Environment at George Mason University on June 25-30. The Washington Youth Summit on the Environment is a student leadership conference designed to develop and encourage future leaders in the field of environmental studies and conservation in the 21st century. George Mason University, along with National Geographic and the Smithsonian National Zoo, led a group of 250 students from across the country in a week-long study of leadership in environmental science and conservation.

### **DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE**

Lewes BPW to extend wastewater service The Lewes Board of Public Works will extend its wastewater service to Savannah Place within the next year. But to lower costs to the residents of the 35-home community, BPW officials are reaching out to two other communities that could benefit from city services. If Savannah Place is the only community included in the project, the

cost to each resident would be an estimated \$51,000, broken down into monthly payments of \$191 for 30 years. But if residents in Donovan Smith mobile home park and Swaanendael Acres were to get on board, the cost to Savannah Place residents would drop more than \$16,000, or nearly 32 percent. Cost to Swaanendael Acres' 74 residents and Donovan Smith's 130 residents would be \$106 and \$26 monthly, respectively. Savannah Place was annexed into the city in August 2009. Residents received water service almost immediately, but the annexation agreement required they also add wastewater services within a set number of years. At the time, the BPW took out a loan to pay for the water work and passed it on to the residents - about \$8,000 per property. All but five property owners have paid off the loan, said BPW General Manager Darrin Gordon...

U.S. wise to get out of Paris Climate Accord I'm confused! Why is Gov. Carney upset because America pulled out of the Paris Climate Accord? I'm sure he understands that the accord requires the United States to send billions of our tax dollars to other countries, with absolutely no strings attached, to spend at their discretion. I'm not really comfortable sending millions in dollars to some warlord in a third world country who has no interest in protecting the environment. America leads the world in environmental technological innovation. Gosh, if the feds have that kinda money to toss around, I'd like to see some bucks for Delaware. Down here in Lower Slower Delaware we've got issues with beach erosion, infrastructure repair and public safety. Hey folks, you wanna raise my taxes for what? Charity begins at home!

### **DELAWARE PUBLIC MEDIA (NPR)**

Delaware cancer deaths are steadily declining Delaware health officials say the state's cancer death rate is steadily declining. A new report from the Division of Public Health shows the state's cancer mortality rate has decreased 15 percent over a decade. A statewide focus on cancer screening has led to the decline, according to Chronic Disease Bureau Chief Lisa Henry. "We have been focusing most of our efforts on getting people screened in order to catch cancer and detect it earlier when it's most treatable," she said. In the 1990's, Delaware had the second highest cancer death rate in the nation. It now ranks 16th highest. Delaware's cancer death rates dropped the most for African Americans, who saw a 24 percent decline. But, even with the improvements, the state's cancer mortality rate is still 5 percent higher than the national average, which stands at 169 deaths for every 100,000 people. And lung cancer remains a problem in Delaware, accounting for a third of all cancer deaths in the state. "Lung cancer is an area that we'd really like to see a change made," Henry said. "We'd like to see more lung cancer screened for so we can see that mortality rate drop." The state is making ground in early screenings for most cancers though...

### **MIDDLETOWN TRANSCRIPT**

DNREC, Division of Public Health accepting proposals for water planning grants The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Division of Watershed Stewardship and Office of Environmental Finance and the Delaware Division of Public Health are accepting project proposals from state, county, and municipal governments and conservation districts for matching grants for wastewater, surface water and drinking water project planning. Proposals must be received by 4:30 p.m. Aug. 23. Eligible projects include planning, preliminary engineering and feasibility analysis of wastewater and/or drinking water projects; stormwater retrofits; green technology practices; stream and wetland restoration projects; small watershed

studies; master surface water and drainage plans; and other source water pollution control projects. Wastewater planning grants assist with wastewater infrastructure project planning and design necessary to submit a loan application for funding consideration. Surface water planning grants support projects and activities that focus on reducing surface water runoff and improving water quality in impaired watersheds. Drinking water planning grants help municipal water systems prepare for large projects such as troubleshooting source water quality and proposing solutions, reconfiguring water plants to optimize treatment, and determining water main size and locations, among other activities.

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## WEST VIRGINIA

### **CHARLESTON GAZETTE-MAIL**

Research on mountaintop removal health effects adequate, panel told Dozens of studies already published about mountaintop removal coal mining's effects on public health provide adequate evidence to support ending the practice to protect coalfield residents, a former West Virginia University researcher and leading author on the subject told a National Academy of Sciences panel on Tuesday. "We know enough," researcher Michael Hendryx told the panel during a meeting in Washington. "If all we do is call for more research, we're asking people to be research subjects without their consent." While at WVU, Hendryx became a target for coal industry criticism when he published dozens of peer-reviewed papers that found coalfield residents living near mountaintop removal operations faced increased risks of cancer, birth defects and premature death, among other health problems. The National Academy of Sciences, with funding from the U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, is conducting a two-year study of the issue, an exercise that in many ways amounts to a review of scientific papers that Hendryx either authored or inspired with his work at WVU. Hendryx, who is not on the academy panel, now is an assistant professor of public health at the University of Indiana Bloomington. The project was announced in August 2016 and funding was in place before the Donald Trump administration - which has promised to roll back regulations on the coal industry - took office. State Public Health Commissioner Dr. Rahul Gupta and former state Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Randy Huffman had asked the U.S. Interior Department for help on the issue, and Interior's OSM provided \$1 million in funding for the academy review.

4th Circuit upholds Justice Energy's \$1.23M fine A federal appeals court on Tuesday upheld a \$1.23 million contempt-of-court fine issued to Gov. Jim Justice's family coal company in a lawsuit filed against the company by an equipment vendor. The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals dispensed with Justice Energy's appeal of the fine with a two-page order. The ruling said the fine is for civil contempt and, therefore, well within the district court's authority. The appeals court also said the matter was not within its jurisdiction to re-examine. In February 2016, U.S. District Judge Irene Berger, in Beckley, fined Justice Energy \$1.23 million after the company failed to respond - for more than a month - to Berger's order finding it in contempt. The underlying case had been filed by James River Equipment, which alleged that Justice Energy owed it about \$150,000 for mining equipment. James River and Justice Energy had worked out a settlement on the debt, but Berger held Justice Energy in contempt for not responding to court

orders and failing to appear at hearings. "The defendant has indisputably violated or failed to comply with several court orders," Berger wrote. "The defendant is clearly in contempt." At the time, Justice Energy - an umbrella for the governor's family mining operations - was owned by the Russian Energy company Mechel OAO. Justice had sold to Mechel in May 2009.

### **WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING**

Logging in W.Va.: Finding A Balance Between Preservation and Profits Halfway between Mill Creek and Helvetia, West Virginia, four miles or so off the main road, Scotty Cook, the owner of a small-scale logging operation in Elkins, trudges along a muddy, deep gullied logging road. Cook has been working in the industry for about 20 years and got started because of his family. "My dad and them, they [were] in it all their lives," he said. "Tradition I suppose." Most of the state's trees are harvested by small-scale logging operations like Cook's. He is logging for Northwest Hardwoods, a company based in Washington state which has four sawmills in West Virginia – two of them in Randolph County. The land is owned by Coastal Timberlands, which owns property in 11 states. He and his crew of about 7 are logging 100 acres of trees, working on the job for months at a time. Cook watches as in the distance a chainsaw operator begins cutting an 80-foot tree. It falls to the ground and then he begins to explain what happens next in the logging process. "He's cutting all the limbs off of it, up to where he'll cut the whole tree top out of it," Cook said. "He's getting it ready for a skidder to come back and hook to it, to take it to the landing to get cut up into log lengths to go to the mill. A large bulldozer-like machine called a skidder – operated by Cook's nephew – backs up toward the downed tree.

Small-scale Logging Still Big Business in W.Va. On this West Virginia Morning, most of the state's trees are harvested by small-scale logging operations, like the one owned by Scotty Cook in Elkins. Producer Jean Snedegar joins Cook on his latest job in a remote area of southern Randolph County. Aircraft manufacturing has a long history in the Ohio Valley region stretching back to the Wright Brothers' first shop. Today aerospace products are among the area's top-dollar exports -- the second biggest export for Ohio, and number one for Kentucky. Becca Schimmel visited one aerospace facility in rural Kentucky to learn how the industry has developed, and where it might be heading. West Virginia's Republican Attorney General has added his name to the list of candidates vying for Democrat Joe Manchin's seat in the U.S. Senate. Ashton Marra reports the 2018 race is starting to heat up with 15 months to go until Election Day.

Long-awaited West Virginia Park Officially Opens Crowds gathered to watch the grand opening of a long-awaited West Virginia park. News outlets report about 100 celebrants gathered Friday to watch the opening of the John Henry Historical Park in Talcott. The park will feature a John Henry statue, an interactive educational kiosk and a picnic shelter. Rick Moorefield, WVU-Tech Extension Agent and project coordinator, says the idea for the park took form in 1968 as a vision of the Hilldale-Talcott Ruritan Club, whose members wanted to bring economic development to the area. It wasn't until 2014 that the Summers County Commission acquired 21 acres for the development of the park, which was earmarked as a \$2.4 million project.

### **WEST VIRGINIA METRO NEWS**

CNBC ranks West Virginia as worst state for business ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N.J. — Business news channel CNBC released its ratings of the "top states for business" for this year



Tuesday, placing West Virginia at the bottom of the list. The Mountain State ranked 50th for the first time in CNBC's 11-year ranking system. Across 10 different categories, West Virginia ranked worse than 40th in six groups. This includes economy, where it placed last. "The state is 1 of only 7 whose economies shrank in 2016," journalist Scott Cohn said. "The decline in state GDP of 0.9 percent for the year was not the biggest in the nation, but West Virginia did not have much to lose." The rankings were determined by factors including economic output, infrastructure, economic growth, livability and educational opportunity and success. West Virginia scored 942 out of a possible 2,500 points.

### **CLARKSBURG EXPONENT TELEGRAM**

City, FCDP pairing will help make Fairmont shine The pairing of the city of Fairmont and the Fairmont Community Development Partnership (FCDP) to fund the demolition of dilapidated and blighted buildings is an almost perfect partnership that will have a lasting, positive impact. Both entities have a lot to gain from working together. The FCDP, or Partnership, has been around since the mid-1990s. The private, nonprofit organization's core mission is to promote community and economic development, along with neighborhood revitalization and affordable housing in targeted low income areas. The Partnership has rebuilt much of Maple Avenue and the Jackson Addition area of town, one brand new home at a time. "Originally, when the partnership was formed, that was one of the initial target areas," Partnership Finance and Community Outreach manager Brian Chenoweth told the *Fairmont News*. "It's close to town, and it's a great place to start. There's some blight, and we want to continue the original mission from when it was started. We want to bring back the neighborhoods and the property values. That's our goal." While the Partnership was slowly building momentum, city and community leaders had the chance to catch up by acquiring and allocating much-needed seed dollars to a massive initiative called the BAD (Brownfields, Abandoned & Dilapidated) Building initiative, which kicked off in 2014 when the city and eight other communities won a \$10,000 technical assistance grant through the Northern West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center. The grant was part of the center's Brownfields, Abandoned & Dilapidated Buildings program, which provided the city with tools to develop a comprehensive survey and plan to deal with BAD buildings...

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## MARYLAND

### **CHESAPEAKE BAY JOURNAL**

Blog: Despite challenges, PA environmental programs face cuts Pennsylvania has no new funding for the Chesapeake Bay, drinking water or the Susquehanna River in a 2017-18 budget that includes cuts to environmental and resource agencies. And some worry the situation may get worse as legislators still have no plan in place to fill a \$1.1 billion shortfall in the nearly \$32 billion spending plan. Despite repeated warnings from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to better fund Pennsylvania's lagging Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts and the state's clean drinking water program, environmental programs overall had their funds cut, some by as much as 50 percent. "We continue the same trend that we've had for the last 13 years: reducing environmental funding year after year and not meeting our environmental obligations," said David E. Hess, a former secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection and now an

environmental lobbyist. "It will continue the other trend; agencies will keep increasing permit fees to meet their costs. It's an unavoidable consequence of the budget they adopted."...

PA spring bass fishing ban staying put - for now Swayed by the concerns of many Pennsylvania anglers, the state's fishery managers decided Tuesday not to lift a springtime ban on smallmouth bass fishing in the middle and lower Susquehanna and lower Juniata rivers. The eight-member Fish & Boat Commission voted unanimously to extend the spawning season catch ban for at least another year, requesting more evidence of the strength of the bass population recovery in those waterways. "We felt that it did no harm not making a decision this year based on science and on public opinion," said John Arway, the commission's executive director. "Over 50 percent of our public comments were that they didn't want to see the season opened. We will continue to watch the river and the condition of the fishery." The commission had proposed in January to lift the ban in 2018, based on surveys by state biologists finding increasing numbers of healthy bass on a 98-mile section of the Susquehanna and 31 miles of the Juniata.

### **EASTON STAR DEMOCRAT**

Bill package in Congress funds Bay cleanup EASTON — A legislative package in Congress proposes funding several environmental initiatives that would help pay for Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts. Six out of nine of the bills included in the package were originally introduced by U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.), according to the senator's spokesman. According to a statement from the senator's office, the package would "reauthorize marquis programs at the heart of restoring and maintaining the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed." Both Democrats and Republicans have signed on as sponsors. "A healthy Bay means a healthy economy for Maryland and the entire Chesapeake Bay Watershed region, which cannot be accomplished without a reliable federal partner," Cardin said. "I urge appropriators to take note of the bipartisan support for authorizing these programs, despite the president's lack of understanding of their worthiness." Chesapeake Bay cleanup funding is feared to be in jeopardy following the release of President Donald Trump's proposed budget, which altogether eliminates funding for the Chesapeake Bay Program, an arm of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's that helps facilitate Bay cleanup between states across the watershed and tracks progress of pollution reduction. One part of the legislation would reauthorize and fund the Chesapeake Bay Program until 2023 at \$90 million each year, which Cardin's office said is more than the program has ever been funding in its history. "States rely on the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program to provide federal accountability, enforceability, and resources to restore the health of this national treasure," Cardin said. "Less pollution means more oysters and crabs, healthier farmland, more boats and tourism on the water, and more jobs." According to Cardin's office, the current authorization for the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program expired in fiscal year 2005, but Congress has appropriated funds each year...

Commentary: Trump USDA cuts show how little he values rural America's drinking water, healthy Chesapeake Bay When the ribbon was cut on Monday, Oct. 24, 2011, for the Woolford-Madison Sewer Project, it was a celebrated event in Dorchester County. More than 300 failing septic systems in the two rural villages were brought into the modern age with a connection to the municipal water treatment system in Cambridge...

### **MY EASTERN SHORE MD**

Dolphins greet boaters near KI KENT ISLAND — Bottlenose dolphins are making their annual appearance in the Chesapeake Bay. The largest estuary in North America, the Chesapeake Bay has a length of 200 miles and 11,684 miles of tidal shoreline, more than the entire U.S. West Coast. Home to many species, the bottlenose dolphin has been making regular appearances in the waters around Kent Island. Jan Jones shared a photo taken from her boat on July 1 by friend Ashley Leighty. Jones' boat was just north of Love Point when they noticed the dolphin breach the water. They stopped and watched as a few pods passed by, and Jones estimated the animals came within 30 to 50 yards of their watercraft. She said they didn't want to get too close, but they were very excited to have a chance to observe. Jones is not the only one to observe these playful creatures, sightings around the Bay Bridge and from points near Wye Island north toward the Chester River have been on the rise since late June, with increased sightings since the beginning of July. The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science invites everyone who spends time on or near the Chesapeake Bay to report dolphin sightings with a new online tracking system. Chesapeake DolphinWatch allows users to mark the location of their dolphin sightings on a map of the Chesapeake and its tributaries so scientists can better understand where the dolphins are and where they go. The online tracker is accessible at [www.chesapeakedolphinwatch.org](http://www.chesapeakedolphinwatch.org). Thanks to the dolphin tracking site, people have the ability to view the locations of recent and past dolphin sightings on a map, and the tracker provides information about dolphins and the Chesapeake Bay...

### **SOUTHERN MARYLAND NEWS**

Leading bay scientist Walter Boynton retires after decades of research Bay scientist Walter Boynton retired last week after working as an estuarine ecologist for decades at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science's Chesapeake Biological Laboratory in Solomons. Noting he's a collaborator, Boynton thanked his family, friends and colleagues in the audience gathered next to CBL's visitor center Friday afternoon to celebrate his 40 years of career...

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## **VIRGINIA**

### **NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS**

Gloucester supervisors still considering rollback on bay protection measures The public could have a chance to comment on a possible reduction in the countywide Resource Management Area that was put in place 25 years ago as part of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. The Gloucester Board of Supervisors is expected to decide next month what proposal it would like to officially present to the Department of Environmental Quality regarding a change to its ordinance. The proposal could change the rules for construction designed to reduce the amount of runoff pollution flowing into the bay's waters. The board reviewed feedback from the state at its meeting last week after it asked DEQ to review a proposal that reduces the countywide RMA, which is primarily land that can be expected to flood once in 100 years. Since 1991, Gloucester's RMA has been everything that is not in the Resource Protection Areas — along tidal shores, tidal wetlands, nontidal wetlands touching tidal wetlands or streams, and a 100-foot-wide vegetation buffer area next to them. Last fall, the board asked the state to review a map showing the 100-foot required RPA, plus only an additional 100-foot RMA and a 100-foot flood plain. The board voted 4-3 in October to send the proposed changes to the county's ordinance to the

state for review. Supervisors Andy James, Robert Orth and Christopher Hutson voted against the move. A letter from DEQ dated May 22 to the county states that several revisions to the proposal are needed before it can be approved, including its definition of the RMA, which the state says is not consistent with regulations. The state asks to review any revisions that are made once again before the plan is submitted for approval.

Dominion offshore wind project in Virginia is back on track

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## MISCELLANEOUS

### **BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

House Seeks EPA Budget Cut, But Not As Much As Trump Wants House appropriators proposed a modest cut for environmental and public lands agencies in their spending bill for fiscal year 2018, reducing funding to \$31.4 billion from the \$32.37 billion for current spending levels. That funding level is \$4.3 billion above what was included in President Donald Trump's budget request. The bill, released today and scheduled to be considered during a subcommittee meeting Wednesday, would:

- \* Set EPA spending at \$7.5 billion, which is \$528 million less than current spending levels. However, that proposed cut is still \$1.9 billion higher than what was included in Trump's budget request;
- \* Cut the Bureau of Land Management's funding by \$46 million to \$1.2 billion;
- \* Provide \$1.5 billion for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a \$38 million cut; and
- \* Cut the Land and Water Conservation Fund programs by \$125 million.

EPA, Industry Back Chemical Security Rule Delay EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt acted appropriately when he moved to delay new chemical plant security rules, agency attorneys and industry groups said in court filings July 10. If the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit agrees, it could clear the way for the Environmental Protection Agency to continue work on a replacement for the regulation (RIN:2050-AG82) on terms likely to be more favorable to major companies as they address the need for accident prevention and emergency response. The EPA's delay "is not an example of delay for delay's sake," agency attorneys wrote, but is "a reasonable and appropriate step to take in assuring that serious concerns about the foundation for the RMP Amendments—including whether certain provisions may do more harm than good—are fully and fairly evaluated before its requirements are put into effect."...

Environmentalists Urge EPA to Test All Pesticide Ingredients The EPA must assess environmental and health effects for all pesticide ingredients, not just the active ingredients that kill pests, the Center for Food Safety argued in a July 10 petition to the agency.

EPA Chemical Risk Reviews Demand New Rigor Under Amended Law EPA scientists are grappling with meticulous new methods imposed by the nation's primary chemicals law for reviewing risks, a senior agency official said.

House Appropriators Reject Call to Shutter Chemical Safety Board The U.S. Chemical Safety Board, targeted for elimination in the White House's budget request earlier this year, would continue operating under a funding proposal released July 11 by a House subcommittee.

## **GREENWIRE**

House proposes to slash EPA, Interior spending House Republicans are pushing deep spending cuts for U.S. EPA and the Interior Department, although the planned cuts are not nearly as drastic as President Trump had proposed. Released this afternoon, the House fiscal 2018 Interior and environment bill, up for subcommittee markup tomorrow, would fund EPA at \$7.5 billion, cutting the agency by more than \$500 million. Still, the funding amount is far more than the White House's proposed \$5.6 billion. Rep. Ken Calvert (R-Calif.), chairman of the Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee, said the bill "prioritized proven programs that have a meaningful impact to achieve these goals while also ensuring our economy can continue to grow." The draft bill supports EPA's coming buyout program for employees by offering resources for the voluntary separation agreements. The bill would provide \$58 million on workforce restructuring at the agency, according to a House Appropriations Committee aide. Trump's budget had proposed \$68 million in fiscal 2018 to reshape EPA's workforce. EPA has planned to offer buyouts to more than 1,200 employees this summer while Trump has proposed to cut 3,800 jobs at EPA in fiscal 2018. The legislation includes a provision authorizing EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to withdraw the Obama-era Clean Water Rule "without regard to any provision of statute or regulation that establishes a requirement for such withdrawal."...

Consol Energy spins off mining business Consol Energy Inc. announced today its board has approved plans to spin off its coal business and cement its identity as a natural gas exploration and production company. The company announced in December 2016 its plans to separate itself from the coal business. In 2015, Consol's natural gas earnings exceeded those from coal. The company's coal business, called Consol Mining Corp., will seek a listing on the New York Stock Exchange, according to securities filings.

Siemens, AES team up to create battery behemoth Siemens AG and AES Corp. are forming a new company to meet surging demand for energy storage and large-scale batteries tied to renewable power. The venture, Fluence, will harness Siemens' existing presence in more than 160 countries. That would put Fluence in competition with companies like Tesla Inc., which just unveiled plans for the world's largest battery system in Australia. Fluence will operate separately from its parent companies but will combine their existing lithium-ion battery technologies under one umbrella and allow each to have a broader focus. Currently, Siemens' storage products target individual facilities and microgrids, while AES specializes in larger grid-scale systems. Siemens is also a major player in the wind market and recently was ranked as a top leader in renewable energy. Separately, the two companies have already deployed more than 460 megawatts of battery storage in 13 countries. AES oversees the largest storage project in the world near San

Diego but also offers coal and oil services. "We really don't think there's anybody like this out there," said AES chief executive Andr s Gluski in a phone interview.

NRDC ad claims reg rollbacks threaten American families A handful of environmental and consumer protection advocacy groups today announced an ad campaign attacking the Trump administration for its enormous regulatory rollback effort. The TV spot shows the daily life of an American family, highlighting areas where government oversight and federal laws promote health and safety for normal citizens, including food and water quality, workplace safety, chemical regulations, aviation and vehicle laws, and clean air limits. The ad will run on cable and broadcast television stations in Washington, D.C. It mentions several laws by name, including the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 and the Clean Air Act of 1970. "Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress are working with corporate lobbyists to undo these safeguards," the voice-over says. "We can't let Trump and congressional Republicans put profits ahead of our health and safety." The six-figure spot comes from the environmental group Natural Resources Defense Council, along with Public Citizen, the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization, the Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention and Stop Foodborne Illness. Accompanying the ad is a list of the executive orders and agency decisions that the groups say threaten public health. These include the president's order to review the Clean Water Rule, U.S. EPA delaying ozone protections, and EPA chief Scott Pruitt rejecting a ban on a pesticide found to harm the brains of fetuses and children.

## **NEW YORK TIMES**

Era of "Biological Annihilation" Is Underway, Scientists Warn From the common barn swallow to the exotic giraffe, thousands of animal species are in precipitous decline, a sign that an irreversible era of mass extinction is underway, new research finds. The study, published Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, calls the current decline in animal populations a "global epidemic" and part of the "ongoing sixth mass extinction" caused in large measure by human destruction of animal habitats. The previous five extinctions were caused by natural phenomena. Gerardo Ceballos, a researcher at the Universidad Nacional Aut noma de M xico in Mexico City, acknowledged that the study is written in unusually alarming tones for an academic research paper. "It wouldn't be ethical right now not to speak in this strong language to call attention to the severity of the problem," he said. Dr. Ceballos emphasized that he and his co-authors, Paul R. Ehrlich and Rodolfo Dirzo, both professors at Stanford University, are not alarmists, but are using scientific data to back up their assertions that significant population decline and possible mass extinction of species all over the world may be imminent, and that both have been underestimated by many other scientists.

## **REUTERS NEWS SERVICE**

Transcript of Reuters interview with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt gave Reuters a wide-ranging interview on Monday at his office in Washington, discussing issues from climate science to automobile emissions. The following is a full transcript of the interview:

REUTERS: You have said the EPA will focus on a "Back to Basics" approach under your leadership. What does this mean for how EPA enforces polluters? You have been critical of the idea of regulation by enforcement.

PRUITT: I think what I'm speaking about there is a consent decree approach to enforcement, where you use judicial proceedings to actually engage in regulation. Enforcement should be about existing regulations that you're actually enforcing against someone who may be violating that, very much in the prosecutorial manner. As attorney general [in Oklahoma], I lived that. There was a grand jury that I led. Being a prosecutor, I understand very much the importance of prioritization, of enforcing the rule of law, of addressing bad actors. That's something we are going to do in a meaningful way across the broad spectrum of cases, whether it is in the office of air or the superfund area, or otherwise...

## **NEWSWEEK**

Why Does EPA Chief Scott Pruitt Want to Repeal the Clean Water Rule On June 27, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt signed a proposed rule rescinding the Obama administration's "Clean Water Rule." This regulation is designed to clarify which streams, lakes, wetlands and other water bodies fall under the protection of the Clean Water Act. EPA developed the Clean Water Rule in an attempt to resolve uncertainty created by a fractured 2006 Supreme Court decision, *Rapanos v. United States*. The *Rapanos* ruling caused widespread confusion about which waters were covered, creating uncertainty for farmers, developers and conservation groups. Efforts to clarify it through informal guidance or congressional action had failed, and EPA acted under mounting pressure from various quarters, including some members of the court. As Oklahoma's attorney general, Pruitt unsuccessfully sued to kill the rule, which he has called "the greatest blow to private property rights the modern era has seen." Now he is seeking to accomplish by administrative fiat what he failed to achieve in court. However, he faces a stiff challenge from supporters of the rule, and the courts may not buy his arguments for wiping a rule off the books. Under the Administrative Procedure Act, federal agencies must follow specific steps when they seek to establish or repeal a regulation. These procedures are meant to establish efficiency, consistency and accountability. To promote fairness and transparency, the law requires that the public must have meaningful opportunity to comment on proposed rules before they take effect.

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